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Halstead, Kansas

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THE MEMOIRS

OF THE  
REVEREND FATHER

HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF THE

MISSION OF THE

REVEREND FATHER

JOHN J. ...

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*Mennonites*

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Historical Sketch  
First Mennonite Church  
Halstead, Kansas

By  
C. E. KREHBIEL  
Newton, Kansas

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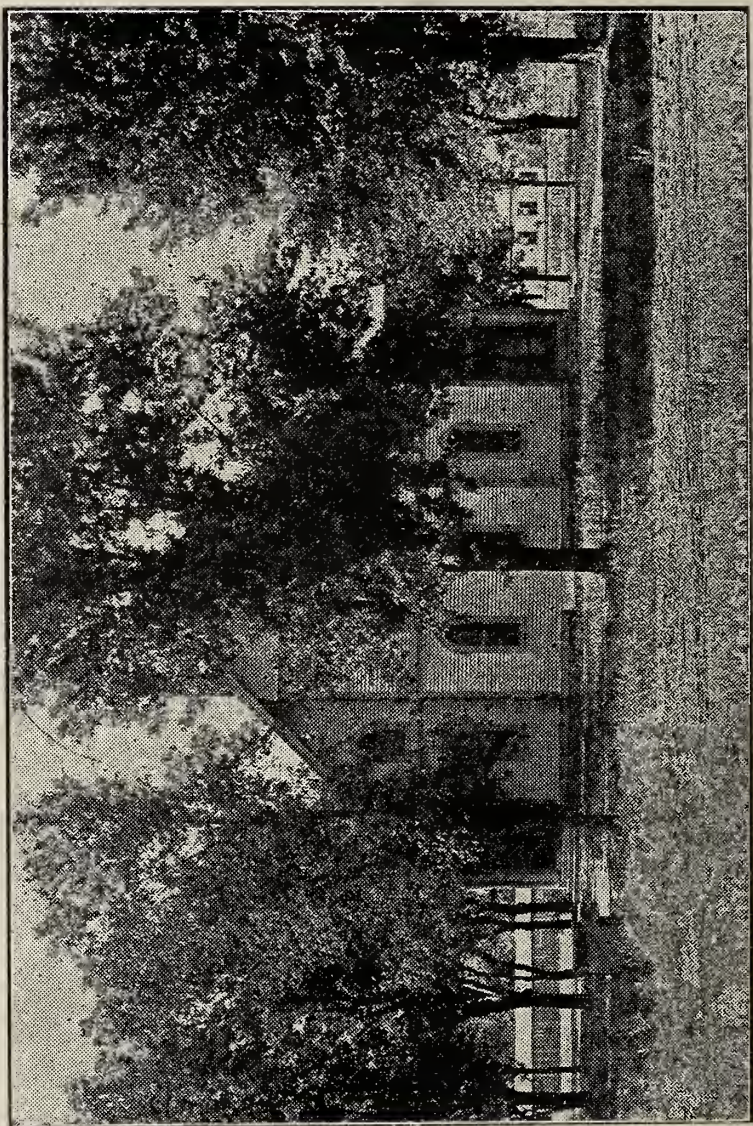
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To the children and  
children's children.

~~553~~

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## The Forward Look



Look at this child's face. — Do you recognize, not the child, but the father or grandfather, or the mother or grandmother, or one of the greatgrandparents in that face?

Listen! I was to speak at the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Halstead Mennonite Church on March 22, 1925. We drove over from Newton on our Ford and shook hands with a number of old acquaintances outside. Then we went into the church.

Seating myself in the rear west bench, this child, kneeling on the seat just in front of me and with chubby hands and chin on the back of the bench, like one of the Cherubs in Raphael's Sistine Madonna, looked innocently at me.

I smiled, and lightly patted his fingers. He withdrew his hands shily and returned the smile.— Whose face, whose head, whose smile, whose eye is that?

The oval shape of the head is familiar. The eyes and that smile remind me of a young man and a young lady I knew some

thirty years ago. I look at the strapping shoulders of the man aside the child. — Why sure! I touch his arm and as he looks round my thoughts scuttle down Memory's Lane and bring me the images of little Kenneth's two grandmothers and two grandfathers (one having been the first pastor of this church), and of five of his great-grandparents, all of whose names are recorded in the First Mennonite Church Book at Halstead.

Oh memories-----

“When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come----- let your children know.” Josh. 4:21.

The children are asking. Let's tell them!

C. E. Krehbiel,  
Newton, Kansas.



# HISTORICAL SKETCH

## First Mennonite Church Halstead, Kansas

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(The following is a sketch that was prepared for the fiftieth anniversary of the First Mennonite church at Halstead which was celebrated March 22, 1925.)

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Dear Friends of the First Mennonite Church at Halstead, Kansas!

I congratulate you upon this auspicious occasion—your 50th birthday. —

Looking out upon your beaming countenances I see many that seem far younger than 50 summers. But observing closer one notices in those youthful faces resemblances of ancestors of one generation, of two generations, and even of three generations back, who in their humble devout way worshiped God in these hallowed halls. A scattering few of these God in His infinite love has spared to bless this day with their presence. In a little while they will report to Him and meet again with that larger company whose mortal remains have been born by tender hands to that ever growing City of the Dead out yonder, but whose immortal spirits have gone to God who gave them, there to dwell with Christ who came to save them, beckoning us today to follow Him.

It is expected of me, and I consider it both a great pleasure as well as a great

honor, on this semi-centennial occasion, to let the inception and the development and growth of the First Mennonite Church of Halstead, Kansas, pass in brief review before you this morning.

In the nature of things the first few years will require more time than later years; for, as the virgin prairie lay here like an unwritten sheet of paper waiting for that generation of men of action to inscribe upon it a major part of the peaceful history of our Commonwealth, so also that same generation was to lay the foundation for a spiritual edifice at whose construction, by the grace of God, we today are still occupied. Theirs it was to plant, ours it is to water, but God alone giveth the increase!

At the head of the "Church Constitution," written in German in the very legible hand of the first church secretary, J. E. Ruth, (and dated Mar. 21, 1875,) we find as a Motto the immortal challenge and promise of Jesus to his first disciples:

"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. — Luke 12:32.

Let this be the keynote for us today!

The Introduction reads:

"The various Mennonites who earlier or later migrated from Europe to America and lately have settled in and around Halstead, on Mar. 21, 1875 had services conducted by Rev. Chr. Krehbiel of Summerfield, Ill., and afterwards conferred concerning the advisability of organizing as a church in order

to have regular services on Sundays and Church Holidays."

The Church Rules adopted were brief, having only 16 Articles. Some of these are interesting, others significant of the times, and others vital for all times. The very first one is a double header, and takes hold of practical church problems, evidently born out of experience—the great schoolmaster of that pioneer day. Hear it:

"Every church member shall consider himself obligated to attend the services on Sundays and Holidays as regularly and as often as possible. He shall seek to avoid any offense or vexation in the church as might occur by neglecting to attend services or church meetings, or by scorning the church deacons, their resolutions, or the ministers or any church member."

The deacons were elected by signed ballot, for six years—not for life—which is significant.

There might be one or more ministers. Their duty was: to preach the word undefiled; to instruct the youth, officiate at marriages and funerals, and to visit the poor and sick of the church. At communion and baptism the elder was to function.

In the matter of marriages the 5. Art. says:

"Since wedlock is ordained of God, members of the church who wish to marry shall have the ceremony performed by a minister of the church, or, where this is impossible, by a minister of a sister church. The wedding ceremony shall as a rule follow immediately after a public service in the

church, public announcement of the betrothal having been twice made on preceding Sundays and God's blessing having been invoked on such union."

Communion was not absolutely closed, but restricted to protestant church members..

Candidates for baptism were previously to be instructed, and minister and deacons were to satisfy themselves of their spiritual preparation for baptism.

The church selected its ministers by Lot, i. e. if a ballot revealed two or more candidates the lot was cast between the two highest. When an election was unanimous the lot was dispensed with, as also where a minister from another church was called. Elders (Aelteste) were to be elected from among the ministers of the church by a majority signed vote.

Article 13 says:

"A church member is to avoid all secret societies as being in contradiction with Christian principles."

This is in accord with the Discipline of the General Conference. In the year 1889 some members disregarded this and it became necessary to act. A recorded Yea and Nay vote was taken. Of 55 men present the 54 who cast their ballots voted that such persons should be considered dismissed from the church until they had severed their connection with such secret society and requested to be reinstated in the church. All this was discussed and done in such a fine spirit that



most of those concerned chose to remain in the church.

All male members from 18 years up were eligible and allowed to vote, but only men over 24 years were eligible as deacons.

The last (16) Art. reads: The regulations laid down in the foregoing make no claim to perfection and may therefore be amended and improved to meet future needs by a two-thirds vote of all who are entitled to vote.

To these Rules 3 important additions were made in the very first year (1875):

1) The church recognizes it as a holy duty to consecrate every newborn child to the Lord in a special prayer when the mother comes to church the first time, invoking God's blessing upon the child and its parents. The minister is to be notified when the mother first brings the child to church.

2) That we may do our share in the spreading of the Kingdom of God a Mission Offering is to be lifted every first Sunday in the month.

3) A "Church Chronicles" shall be kept. Into these chronicles nothing is to be entered that has not been arranged, or examined and approved by the church. This resolution is to stand so long as only 3 voting members demand it."

Let us take a glimpse into these Church Chronicles:

"It has been a praiseworthy trend among Mennonites, when seeking to establish a new home, also to consider what advantages such a place might offer for the founding of a church; and it would be a matter

greatly to be regretted should this heritage of our pious fathers ever be lost."

In Illinois and other states there were Mennonites who had little or no means but desired to have their own homes and were casting about for some suitable location. The Western Conference that met at Summerfield in 1869 took up this important matter and at her request a Plan that had been placed before the Conference was published in the "Friedensbote."

Individuals and groups made trips. In 1871 eight men from Summerfield made a tour in a covered wagon thru Missouri, northern Kansas, Nebraska, and back thru Iowa. One of them (John Krehbiel), father of four small children, became ill of typhoid fever in Iowa and never again saw his family.

The following year (1872) four brethren from Russia came to America for a visit. Among them was Bernard Warkentin who staid here. Conditions in Russia became more unfavorable for those of our faith and all eyes were turned toward unsettled frontier lands of America.

The first definite steps toward a settlement in Kansas were taken when in the fall of 1873 the Summerfield church elected a committee of 4, Jacob Leisy, Chr. Krehbiel, David Lehman, and Abr. Stauffer, to look at southwestern Kansas lands, and if possible to select a suitable place, and take initial steps for a contract-purchase of the same .... They left Oct. 9. The brethren from South Russia, John Fast, Heinrich Goerz, Heinrich Flaming, D. Goerz, and B.

Warkentin went with them. On Nov. 1 they returned having selected Halstead—a town then of possibly 200 population—for the new settlement.

The land under consideration in alternating sections belonged to the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company. This company agreed to reserve all its holdings in townships 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, Range 2 West of 6 P. Meridian at a fixed price for a term of 3 years for Mennonite settlers. In January 1874 a group of 30 brethren went to Kansas again, and all bought land. On this occasion the first Mennonite or German services were held in the Halstead schoolhouse, Jan. 11, 1875.

The Church Chronicles say:

“This was a matter of such importance that we quote here on it from the report of Bro. Chr. Krehbiel, Traveling Minister of the General Conf. of Mennonites of N. A. for the year 1875: “Hardly had the year 1874 begun when the 6. of Jan. led to a further trip to Kansas, this time with a group of almost 30 brethren from here and Russia. The purpose of this trip was further to inspect and buy land for a colony of local (Summerfield) and other Mennonites who desired to move westward, but did not want to be without services and church connections. The consequent purchase is known and need not be further discussed here.

“But you will pardon a few details on the first German service ever held in Halstead. At 11 o'clock our company besides a number of other Germans and some

Americans surrounded the local school house. Soon a harmonious male chorus sent out upon the breezes the strains of that grand hymn

Ich habe nun den Grund gefunden,  
Der meinen Anker ewig haelt ... etc.

A prayer of thanks and supplication let the light of God's mercy shine upon us more clearly. The further song

Ich bete an die Macht der Liebe,  
Die sich in Jesu offenbart ....

served as a seal to the prayer and as introduction to the sermon on I Cor. 13,13 where it found application in a two-fold sense as the Christian's anchor in Faith, Hope, and Love. The German services closed with

Wo findet die Seele die Heimat die Ruh,  
Wer deckt sie mit schuetzenden Fittigen zu?

"Inwardly strengthened by the evident guidance of God we for the first time left this house; and each one of us doubtless felt that the Lord would continue to strengthen and bless his people in future gatherings here. This feeling our American friends shared, for it was stated in that language, that we had not come only to enjoy God's grand out-of-doors, but that we rather wanted to serve him and build up his kingdom, to which they shook our hands heartily and welcomed us as brethren in Christ."—Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

That little schoolhouse was a small one-story, one-room frame building. There I

spun tops, and played marbles, and wrestled, and sometimes studied. — A room was added to the west. Then followed a four-room two-story brick building to which later were added two more rooms, only to make way still later for the two present magnificent modern structures probably costing 500 times more.

J. E. Ruth writes me: "This schoolhouse was used by us until our church was built, just north of where the Methodist church now stands. They organized a church after ours and also used the schoolhouse until they built a church.

"Several years prior to the time we came, Murat Halstead of Cincinnati passed thru Halstead, and when told the town was named after him, he said, "I'll give a bell to the first public building erected here." George Sweesy, president of the school board, knew of this, and when we built the first brick building, he told me as secretary of the board to write and remind Mr. Halstead of his promise, telling him we were building a school house and would appreciate a bell. Soon afterwards I had his letter stating he would send the bell as soon as he could have one cast with suitable inscription. I had the letter published in the Halstead paper."—The bell bears the inscription "To My Namesake Town. M. Halstead" and today hangs in the Methodist church.—But this is aside.

The settlement now grew apace. B. Warkentin was the first to locate here. Peter Wiebe followed from Missouri. In the fall of the same year (1874) Iowa sent



its first representative in Chr. Hirschler; and from Illinois came John Kuehny, John Lehman, Chr. Schmutz, Jacob Dettweiler, and John Dettweiler. Most of these had families, and they gathered from time to time for worship, being served by ministers from neighboring new settlements.

In the spring of 1875 came John Haury, John W. Ruth, Daniel Haury, J. E. Ruth, Valentine Krehbiel, Daniel Bachmann, Peter Bartel, and Elizabeth Ruth. With this addition steps were taken to organize a church, and all those named, except P. Bartel who joined later, became Founding Members of the church.

On Palm-Sunday, Mar. 21, 1875, Chr. Krehbiel conducted the second service in the little schoolhouse. Afterwards the brethren met and he presided while organizing. The same day the Constitution was drafted and adopted, and it was decided to elect a minister and deacons and celebrate communion on Easter Sunday, Mar. 28, 1875.

This time they met in the home of Jacob Dettweiler in Halstead. (This place was known as the "Dettweiler Hotel," a 2-story frame building that stood just north of the present Linn store. "Das deutsche Gasthaus" was painted on the front in crescent shape.) After services Val. Krehbiel was unanimously elected and immediately ordained. In the afternoon John Haury, Daniel Bachmann, and John W. Ruth were elected deacons and installed, and communion was held. Chr. Krehbiel officiated and Deacon Jacob Leisy of Summerfield assisted. Rev. Dodge of Halstead and Dan-

iel Krehbiel of Cleveland, O., gave utterance to cordial closing words.

Thus on the Resurrection Day the Halstead Mennonite church was born!

Fear not, little flock, for it  
is your Father's good pleasure  
to give you the kingdom

\* \* \* \* \*

But a church should have a meeting house; and these were scarce in the early days in Kansas. All were beginners and much occupied with providing shelter for their growing families. Then too the settlement extended more than a dozen miles north of Halstead, and conveyance was in the ox-team or lumber-wagon age. Therefore it was arranged to rotate services, meeting two Sundays in the Halstead schoolhouse and the third in one in Twp. 22, Sect. 26 north of town. The meetings were held after noon as English services were conducted at the schoolhouses in the morning.

The first death to sadden the newcomers was that of Benjamin, the 8 year old little son of David Unruhs, in Dec. 1875. This made it necessary to lay out Another City—the present Halstead Cemetery—for which Mr. and Mrs. B. Warkentin donated two acres to the church.

As the settlement grew it was felt that the church should have an Elder; and having been elected Val. Krehbiel was ordained on Jan. 9, 1876 by the brethren Wm. Ewert and Jacob Stucky.

Thus another step toward a completely organized church had been taken. But still

the congregation was without a home, and there were many other needs. Uppermost among these was the school question. As it was not practical for all to meet at one place of worship, it was even less feasible to have one day-school. Plans for two schools could not be realized at once, so the pastor suggested introducing Sunday school. This found favor, and on the second Christmas day 1876 the S. S. began with a Christmas celebration in Halstead. Practically the whole church was present and the leaders, Daniel Langenwalter and Daniel Bachmann had arranged a very appropriate program. It is to be hoped that your Sunday school will not forget to celebrate its 50. anniversary, Dec. 26, 1926.

The Sunday school was a great aid in many ways. First, it gave opportunity to instruct the youth in religion. Then Sunday school was arranged at both schoolhouses, so that where preaching services had to be omitted the Sunday school met. This continued thru 1876; but with the constant increase, especially in the north, larger church quarters became an absolute necessity. The northern group borrowed money and erected a building at "Christian" and dedicated it on Mar 4, 1877 with an overflow meeting.— (The name "Christian" was chosen because the abutting land on three of the sections forming the cross-roads was owned by three Christians viz—Christian Krehbiel, Christian Hirschler and Christian Voran) Thus where lately Indians had prowled and buffalo ranged now stood a plain rough-board meeting house of hard-working, thrif-



ty Mennonites. "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples." Rev. 21:3.

Fear not, little flock, for it  
is your Father's good pleasure  
to give you the kingdom

\* \* \* \* \*

It became evident that the first division of the Halstead church along geographical lines was imminent. Two sets of deacons were soon created thus: for Halstead, John W. Ruth, John Haury, and Daniel Ruth; for Christian, Daniel Bachmann, Jacob Vogt, and Daniel Krehbiel. The annual meeting was united, but semi-annual meetings and communion were held at each place. In the north a 4½ month term of German school was held during the summer of 1877. Halstead was not quite so fortunate; but in the fall of that year subscriptions were readily gotten for a church in Halstead. Friends in town also contributed, and those in the north helped as Halstead had aided them. The plan was to use the new building for both church and German school.

With the second building came the desire to have weekly services at each place. The pastor having previously asked for assistance, David Goerz was elected. The ordination and the dedication of the new church took place on Jan. 1, 1878. The pastor, Val. Krehbiel officiated. Neighboring ministers who participated were, D. Gaeddert, Peter Ratzlaff, and Jacob Stucky.

Halstead now had services and Sunday school every Sunday; Christian had services

one Sunday and Sunday school the next, and 6 months of summer school in 1878.

The first Mennonite church was a frame building and stood just north of the present M. E. church. It had long drop-table benches to be used for Summer school. Later it was moved to the NE corner of the block SW of the present church, and in 1924 changed to a residence. The present church building cost \$5961.51 including the half block. Non-members contributed \$765.10. Among these contributors I find the names of T. F. Burrows, O. E. Jones, C. Eisenmayer, Judge Groom, M. S. Ingalls, J. Ryan, John Pierce, John Tibbott and D. Marcy.

This church was dedicated on Easter day, 1885, just 10 years to the day after the church was organized and 7 years after it divided into Halstead and Christian.

John Dettweiler sold the Christian group a 2-acre plat for a Cemetery for \$15 and at once gave the money to the Mission treasury. The first grave here holds the remains of Jacob Blum, buried Apr. 13, 1878.—But this takes us away from the Halstead church.

On March 26, 1878 the whole church met in annual meeting and what had been anticipated for some time now culminated in a peaceable division into 2 independent churches, but still with some common interests, as will be seen later.—The Elder, Val. Krehbiel, was to continue with Christian, but to serve Halstead till an elder for that place was chosen. On Easter Sunday the two churches met for the last time in holy communion and then, 3 years after its or-

ganization, out of one church had become two.

This was a division to meet practical conditions, not a schism. Naturally, considering the conglomerate of Mennonites from various States as well as from Germany and Russia, views often differed, but, says the Record, "One of the most important experiences for the preservation of peace, repeatedly made in the first 3 years, was this, that patient waiting for indications of the Lord's leadings always proves a blessing so long as any matter has not found general and willing assent."

The spiritual life and growth the Lord alone can judge aright, but the aim has been to keep the celestial home-fires burning in prayer, services and sacraments. Meetings and Sunday school were always well attended, even when weather was disagreeable. Family worship was the rule in most homes.

Outwardly the church was active also. In 1876 it joined the Western and the General Conference, the former having been held in Halstead in the fall of 1876. On account of lack of funds it was necessary at times to name proxies, but the church was always represented at Conference. And it was not only present but actively present, for the Record says: "All financial obligations assumed for it by the delegates were met by the church. This may also be said of the Foreign Mission. Regular Mission Study Hours and Offerings were instituted, making it possible annually to remit commensurate sums to the Central Mission

Treasury." When the Western Conference met here the first "Missionsfest" was also celebrated; many others have since been held here. On one of these the first converts from our mission field among the Arapahoe Indians were baptized.

When the church was founded it numbered 28 members and 52 souls. At the end of the third year there were 115 members and 228 souls. Of these 50 members and 82 souls remained in the Halstead church, while 65 members and 146 souls made up the Christian church, and this church acquired the Communion Service by paying half the purchase price to Halstead. Christian was given the Original Church Records upon request of the elder, paying for one-half of the books, and Halstead bought new books into which the records etc. were copied to this point.

With this we may now take leave from Halstead's healthy sister, Christian, and note the expanding life and growth of The First Mennonite Church, Halstead, Kansas, as it is named in the Charter of incorporation dated Apr. 21, 1884, and taken out by Chr. Krehbiel, D. Goerz, John Haury, John W. Ruth and John Lehman; J. H. McNair acknowledging it as Notary Public.

On March 1, 1879 the families of Chr. Krehbiel, David Lehman, Michael Lehman, Jacob E. Schmitt et al. had come from Summerfield; and on Apr. 19, Chr. Krehbiel, who had organized the church 4 years before, was elected elder, thus relieving Rev. Val. Krehbiel who had served in this capacity.

Of this trip from Summerfield to Halstead one thing especially has left its impress on my mind, possibly because of the method of instruction! We children were having the time of our life on our maiden ride in a special car. At Kansas City officials of the railroad said we should now have to take another car. We were hearded from the upholstered car into one that had lath seats like lawn furniture. The leaders in our group at once protested so vigorously that the order was rescinded. We were, therefore, soon corralled in the other coach again, hatless and noisy as ever. Suddenly a 9 year old boy who is here today was asked by his father, "Where is your hat?" A trembling voice piped, "I don't know." Someone suggested that it had probably been left behind in the rejected coach. Here was the time for an object lesson. The father had it in the palm of his caloused right hand—he wasn't wearing kid gloves either—and he applied it broadside over the lad's left ear so that the receiver inside rang. It took effect at once, and the "lost hat" was rescued from the hatrack where someone had playfully pitched it.

We arrived before Prohibition did in Kansas, and Halstead was wet as other frontier towns. But the agitation to put Kansas in the van of this movement was on, and reached into a church meeting. Sentiment had, however, crystallized so little then with the newcomers that a neutral position was assumed by the church. Later this was different. In 1901 the church passed the resolution "that the Halstead



church expects of its members that they refrain from any acts that are contrary to law, including this (Prohibition) part of it also."

It is interesting in this connection to note that it was a Mennonite vote which made Halstead dry. J. E. Ruth writes me thus:

"You ask me how many saloons Halstead had. There was only one, and it went out of business several years before Kansas became a prohibition state. It happened thus: I was a member of the city council at the time. There were five of us and each year the keeper of the saloon had to take out a new license. When the thing came up this time, for the council to act, I was not present—had been feeling badly and stayed at home. Late in the evening a committee came after me, saying that the four members present were tied and needed my vote. So they took me down in a buggy, and I cast my vote against the saloon, hence my vote made Halstead dry, so to say. "

Compared with Summerfield of 1879, just 24 miles away from Anhauser-Busch at St. Louis, with its handful of people and five saloons and drunken brawls still haunting my childhood memory, Halstead always was rather dry.

A young man who as German citizen had taken up active combative service in the army there applied for admission to the Halstead church in 1879. In reply the church gave him the written declaration "that

those who are under the military law cannot be received into the church."

The young man did not believe in the tenet of non-resistance and it was rumored that he really wanted a letter from Halstead to get into a neighboring sister church that had intimated he would be received if he could produce such a letter. The case thus was an involved test case. — The Halstead church was not unreasonable in this point for it had a member in good standing at the time who had taken up active service in our Civil War. He, however, now accepted the church tenet of non-resistance.

\* \* \* \* \*

## **I. Organizations Connected with the Church**

We have thus far spoken largely of the church proper as it developed in its first 5 years. But there were a number of organizations originating from or more or less closely connected with the church that require brief mention here.

### **1) The Mennonite Board of Guardians.**

Summerfield had been a center of activity in fostering the large immigration movement from Russia. Now Halstead became such a center, especially since Chr. Krehbiel chairman; D. Goerz, secretray, and B. Warkentin, agent of the Mennonite Board of Guardians, all resided here. Halstead and the Halstead church thus became known in Mennonite circles far beyond the confines of both State and Nation, more than Summerfield was before this.

The immigration movement is a chapter

for itself, and cannot be entered into here in detail; but it had its influence on the Halstead church, making of it a miniature "Meltingpot."— Many ministers from far and near visited the church and proclaimed the wonderful words of life from its pulpit. Here those from eastern States, South Germany, North Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Poland, France, Russia, and far-away Siberia met and comingled and lived with varying customs and habits, dialects and languages, predilections and prejudices, a plain, sturdy, hard-working, thrifty, God fearing people, who had a leading part in making Kansas the foremost wheat state in the Union, sending its famous Turkey Red Hard Wheat product out over the Seven Seas, thus by the sweat of their brows laying the foundation for the present-day slogan, "Kansas Grows The Best Wheat in the World."

(At least 14 members of the Halstead church were or are active in the milling or grain business. B. Warkentin was the first with his water mill at Halstead.)

While each group had its weakness, it also had its strong points, and there was mutual opportunity to profit by this close contact. Of course, where divergence was marked and, possibly, uncompromising, friction was inevitable; but group-consciousness along these lines seldom if ever became crucial in the church.

## 2) The "Donation" or School Fund.

That the leaders in this new settlement were school men, is very evident from the



records. Those who came from Summerfield had been staunch backers of the first Mennonite higher school in the United States; and had all the other participating churches given their school equal proportionate support, Wadsworth Institute might today easily stand at the head of the list of Mennonite educational institutions in America.

Even in Halstead, while they had to battle with hot winds, and grasshoppers, and drouth, and literally dig a scant living out of the raw earth, with debts and cramped huts for their growing families, and straw sheds for their stock, with local schools and churches yet unbuilt, these school men pledged themselves to pay "their share of the salary still due Prof. van der Smissen," or to bear their share of the perennial Wadsworth school deficit. —While anxious friends surrounded the deathbed of Wadsworth in Ohio, a new school project was being born on the Kansas praries with the Halstead church as its cradle.

Of this project the Chronicles of the Sister-Church at Christian say in part:

"When making the first large land purchase Bro. Chr. Krehbiel succeeded in his efforts to obtain a donation of 160 acres of land for each purchase of a given number of acres and cash payment of a given sum on such purchase, such land to be a "Donation" for school purposes for its settlers.

"In consequence 4 quarter-sections were thus acquired; to be selected as nearly as possible in the middle of the 4 southernmost Twps. contracted for, (namely, Twp. 24 Twp. 23, SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  Sec. 15; Twp. 22, SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  Sec.

15; and Twp. 21, SE¼ Sec. 15.). All of this land was deeded to Chr. Krehbiel as "Trustee," that is he as trustee received the warranty deed."

"Now the question arose, What shall be done with this Donation, and who controls it? Chr. Krehbiel procured it, has it in hand and pays taxes on it.... The outcome was, under the initiative of Chr. Krehbiel and with consent of all participants, that the income of the Donation is to go to the 2 churches, Halstead and Christian, as already existing, for their school purposes."—Out of the 2 churches the following persons were elected as controlling committee: Chr. Krehbiel, D. Goerz, Jac. E. Schmitt, David Lehman, Jac. Vogt, John J. Rupp, and Val. Krehbiel.

Unfortunately not infrequently schools and school locations become a bone of contention among individuals and churches even where all have the best of intentions.

A majority of the committee was agreed to and did sell the 640 acres of land for \$3900. In the light of present-day land values the dissenting small minority, among them the one who had gotten the concession, had the better plan in wanting to hold and lease the land.

"The proceeds (\$800) from 80 acres of this land were to be used for a Higher School, provided such a school were erected within our bounds in the next 10 years, if not, then the amount is to revert to the original sum and be a part of the Church School Fund. This \$800 was given to the Halstead College Association for shares....

in the interests of the Mennonite "Fortbildungsschule."

Thus the matter went out of the hands of the church proper and is not strictly further local church history. But as members of the Halstead and Christian churches and friends made up the money and built a school building and offered it to the Kansas Conference (after 1889, called Western District Confer.); and the Conf. accepted it, we should mention this fact. And since the "Halstead Seminary" —as it was known in English—was operated in Halstead from 1883 to 1893, when Bethel College absorbed it and most of the Donation, rising out of its ashes, figuratively speaking, we should at least note what a leading part the Halstead church took in educational advancement. — And in those ten years this school played an important part in the development of the church. It brot leading educators to Halstead ,two of whom H. H. Ewert and G. A. Haury, are still active, while two others who have left a lasting impress upon Bethel College, C. H. Wedel and H. O. Kruse, have gone to their reward. And how far this circle of influence has widened thru the years, may be seen from one instance: The two leading educators among Mennonites in Canada for almost a generation now, H. H. Ewert and D. Toews, have been principal and student at Halstead over 3 decades ago.— At a Mennonite conference in Langham, Sask., in 1923—thirty years after the school was closed—13 Halstead teachers and students were present.

### 3) The Leisy Orphan Aid Society.

As the Halstead church was in the van among Mennonites in school matters, so also was it in our Home- as well as the Foreign Mission movement and benevolences.

John Haury, the father of the first Mennonite Missionary in America, S. S. Haury, was one of the founders and first deacons of this church. The young missionary, having graduated from Wadsworth and spent several years in Barmen, Germany, for special preparation—likely the first Mennonite to study abroad—was ordained at the 7th General Conference at West Swamp, Pa., on Nov. 26, 1875. At an adjourned session in 1776 he represented the Halstead church with 2 votes. In 1880 he officially took up Mission work among the Arapahoe Indians in the Indian Ty., having been there repeatedly, before, studying the field. He and Mrs. Haury later were members of the Halstead church for 7 years.

Again, 2 years before our Mission in India was begun the Halstead church sent in the first offering — \$70 — for it in case it should materialize.

Chr. Krehbiel, its elder, had been active as traveling minister in the Home Field even before coming to Kansas; and he was the first president of the Foreign Mission Board, serving 24 years. — In Summerfield he had a staunch supporter of church activities in Bro. Jacob Leisy who also became interested in the Kansas settlement. He was well-to-do and had no direct heirs. From him the Foreign Mission board received the heartening gift of \$5000; and a

like sum was put at the disposal of the Deacons of the Halstead and Christian churches for Home Missions, especially orphans. For those days these were very considerable sums.

The Leisy Orphan Aid Society, incorporated 1884, was the result of the latter bequest. It is under the control of the 4 church Boards: Halstead, Christian, West Zion, and Garden Twp., hence not exclusively a child of Halstead, but during his life the elder of this church was the president of the Society, and he and his good wife had for years made their own home a home for orphans, thus enabling the organization to find homes for about 87 of the world's unfortunate little ones, a number of whom later joined the Halstead church. The holdings of the Society have increased considerably in time. (The Orphan Farm which John Hirschlers have now farmed for 38 years—NW¼ Sec. 11 Twp 24, Lakin—was bot with Bro. Leisy's consent.) And it has been possible in these later years of stress, in an inconspicuous way, to supply food and clothing for needy orphans in Canada, Germany and Russia.

#### 4) The Mennonite Charite.

Not only in the matter of putting virgin soil under cultivation, of helping immigrants, of fostering education, of aiding orphans, and of Home- and Foreign Missions, but in other benevolences as well did the Halstead Mennonite church participate as pioneer.

The Halstead hospital was erected by Dr. A. E. Hertzler in 1902. It was a new



venture for this section, and fared so ill that creditors would have made it short-lived had not the Elder of the Halstead Mennonite church and friends come to the rescue by organizing the Mennonite Charite, of which he was made president and the writer secretary. The indebtedness was liquidated, the deed transferred to the Charite, and the hospital let to Dr. Hertzler with the understanding that if it were sold he should have the first right of purchase, and that at the price the Charite paid for it, because the doctor had sustained a considerable loss in building it, and one object was to save the institution and to keep so able a physician and surgeon in our community. Some years afterwards the doctor bought the hospital back; and you have seen it expand since until today it is by far the most important establishment in Halstead in a business and professional way; and the name of the institution is favorably known far beyond the state of Kansas.—This, however, again diverges. The Charite is under control of the four churches and co-operates with the Leisy society. (I counted 30 automobiles parked at the hospital to-day at noon and was told that patients were turned away for lack of room.)

In the matter of Publication this church also evidenced its faith by its support. When the Bundesbote, the first General Conference organ came to life, ten brethren of the Halstead church agreed each to pay for one extra copy. When the Catechism was to be printed the church instructed the deacons "to place an advance order for

"100 or 150 copies." This was in 1882.

Rev. D. Goerz then of this church published the first German paper "Zur Heimat" for Mennonites of the West at Halstead. He was also instrumental in organizing the Mennonite Mutual Fire Insurance Co. in 1880 and for years was its secretary. The new Halstead Church was insured in this company in 1884. In 1924 this company paid \$65,508.10 in losses and its Risks amounted to over \$32,000,000.00.

## II Organizations Within the Church

### 1) Sunday school and Summer school.

The Sunday school and the "Summer" school are so closely knit together in the church that it will be best to speak of them together.—We have noted how as early as 1876 the Sunday school was introduced as a substitute for the Summer school, because of lack of means and school quarters.

It is interesting to note how well and with what the Sunday school was equipped in those pioneer years. Of course it was all German, and it started with the "Erste Lesebuch" and "Biblische Geschichte" from the American Tract Society, and the New Testament and the "Jubeltoene." (The "Volksfreund," Dr. George Seibert, editor, also of the Tract Soc., was a much read family paper in those days.)

In 1879 the Class Books and the International Lessons were introduced. In 1882 the "Christliche Kinderfreund" was ordered, but it gave way to "Nachrichten aus der Heidenwelt" of the General Conference (29 years older than the present "Mission Quar-

terly") and in 1886 the long anticipated "Kinderbote," that still appears, replaced the "Nachrichten."

Many little Children Stories and Reward Cards were also used to create and hold interest. (How we used to like those colored transparent picture cards!) The second Christmas day was Children's Day. An evening program was given by them and they received presents much as they do now. In those early days of stern reality, stern eyes frowned upon the inclination to frivolity that today has in many places made a mere mockery of the birthday of our Lord. In this matter exhuberant youth needs the sympathetic check of maturer years now as then to keep it within wholesome bounds.

I recall, in this connection, how some of us, becoming active in Sunday school work, at a celebration late in the 80ies introduced a number of innovations. A log house and a manger were made from corn stalks. Dolls were used. An angel was suspended over it all and higher up a large star. There was a lighted hollow cross. At a given time when a button was pressed the cover pieces dropped in succession and the glaring words, Koenig, Priester, Prophet, blazed forth from the fiery cross. We thought that about the nicest Christmas celebration our church had ever had. Our correspondent to the Bundesbote evidently was also pleased and reported somewhat in detail. About 6 months after that I was surprised and set to thinking by having someone point out a correspondence from Russia in the Bundesbote, taking us severely to



task for our heathen way of celebrating the Lord's birthday. I had occasion, when in Russia on Relief work, at one of their Christmas festivals to recall the incident in a friendly way, for the danger of unbecoming excesses along the lines indicated is ever present with us.

The Halstead Sunday school was an open door by which many, whose parents had not joined the church, came in. Also by this door the first instrument of music, an organ, came in in 1882. There was some opposition to having any instrumental music in church. This opposition is traditional with our church. In order to ameliorate, the Sunday school proposed that friends buy and set the organ in, to be used by the Sunday school and the choir. The request was granted.

It might be added here, that in those days the good custom prevailed of having the children remain for services after Sunday school, and we youngsters had reserved seats on the two front rows in the old church. Behind us sat several trusty monitors within easy reach of our ears in case we should forget ourselves.

The Summerfield church had its German Religious school, as was the Mennonite custom, and school interest ran high from the first in Halstead. The record states that in 1878 the church here decided to have 8 months of school and to pay Peter Haury \$40 a month as German teacher. The plan apparently was that he teach 4 months in Halstead and then 4 months in the country north.

If this was carried out, for those days and conditions both the length of the term and the salary were very creditable, especially when one recalls that 20 years later District school boards bargained and tried to get teachers to accept \$25 a month for 7 months. Of course teachers were not so plentiful then as now. For a year or two the Summer school was connected with the Halstead Seminary, thus offering the normal students opportunity to do practice teaching.

For some reason not quite clear to me discipline was more of a problem in these Summer schools, and competent teachers harder to get. Could the language or the summer heat have been the cause? Or was it as the record seems to suggest, that the parents did not lend the proper moral support?

These Church Schools rendered a valuable service, and can do so today. The much lauded Vacation Bible School of other denominations of 1925 was nothing new with us 50 years ago. But we may have underestimated it.

## 2) The Choir, Mission Societies, Senior and Junior Christian Endeavor, etc.

Instruction in the Catechism has always been a part of the educational system of the church. Candidates for baptism were expected to attend this instruction as a rule, and to memorize the smaller catechism, and prior to baptism to pass a public examination before the church. These practices have been modified somewhat in later years.

The Ladies' Mission or Aid Society (Naehverein) was also one of the first to be organized in our whole denomination. It dates back farther, but was officially organized in 1881.

At a special program this afternoon more is to be said of it so I pass the Sr. as well as the Jr. Society by here. (See Appendix A)

The Y. P. S. C. E. is probably the oldest in our General Conference, having been organized in 1885. This was during the Halstead Seminary days and H. H. Ewert, H. P. Krehbiel, H. O. Kruse, Jacob Rupp and others were active in effecting its organization. There was some question as to the relation of the Endeavor Society to the church. In 1888 the church took this matter up and had the society adopt a constitution which specifically made a branch of the church out of the society, just as the Sunday school and other organizations within the church are.

For some years the church also has a Junior Endeavor that is very active and a good feeder to the Senior society. (See Appendix B)

In the early years the Halstead church gained a reputation for excellent congregational four-part singing and its exceptional choir music. J. E. Ruth was the first leader. To my inquiry about it he writes: "In the first choir we organized at Halstead were my sister, Mrs. K. M. Krehbiel (everybody called her Aunt Kate), two daughters and two sons of A. T. Kruse, J. W. and H. P. Krehbiel. There may have been others

that I do not recall. I remember very well when the Bethel College corner stone was laid on Oct. 12 1888, for I had a chorus of 40 voices or more to sing for the occasion. I had organized a choir in Halstead after the first church was built; and if I mistake not, had been in charge of the music at Halstead from the time it was organized. In those days we had no organ or piano, and the only instrument I had was a tuning fork to get the pitch." This last remark of Bro. Ruth makes it necessary that I revise my statement above, that an organ was the first musical instrument used in the Halstead church.

All of these arms or branches of the church can be, ought to be, and usually are a great support to the mother church.

In passing might I suggest that every church and every organization in the church should by all means celebrate its 25. anniversary. For then many of the founders will likely still be present and can give information that will be lost irretrievably if one waits 50 or more years.

### III Organizations Emanating from the Church

In 1894, that is over 30 years ago, it is recorded that the church sent 7 delegates to the Western Conference. It must therefore have had almost the same number of members as the church has today; for to the last Conference it also sent 7 delegates. (One delegate for 30 members.)

But there are two ways in which a church may develop growth in numbers.

The one is by adding to its own local membership. The other is by becoming the mother of new churches. Halstead seems to have been destined to expand most in the latter direction; becoming, as one might say, the mother of a large family.

And that, too, was characteristic of the early settlers; for the old Family Register of the church exhibits 23 families entered in the first 10 years, to whom 10 or more children were born. Of these 5 had 11, 6 had 12, 3 had 13, 1 had 14, 1 had 15, 2 had 16, and 1 had 18 children. The writer himself had 75 first cousins, but not all in this church. — This, however, is aside.

There is no intention here to arrogate undue significance to the Halstead Mennonite church. And as the question might be argued, whether Halstead or Christian should be considered the "original church," let us here, in the interest of harmony, assume that they were "Twin Sisters," living together for 3 years and then becoming next-door peaceable neighbors with common interests to this day.

In 1888 the West Zion and the Garden Township Mennonite churches were organized largely from members of the old Halstead-Christian group.

In 1897 the Halstead church furnished the nucleus for the Bethel College church and the First Mennonite church of Geary, Okla.; and still later Rev. C. Krehbiel began to hold meetings at Burrton, from which sprang the First Mennonite church at Burrton, Kans. Even her good neighbor, the First Presbyterian church of Halstead, had a



large sprinkling of names of those who once were members of the Mennonite church or attended services there.

The question of Language came up early in the church. For that there would be a transition from the German to the English in time was inevitable. Even in 1883 a resolution was passed that, "if possible there are to be English services in the church every other Sunday (evening)." This was not carried out for the present, we read, "because of lack of ministers who were proficient in this language."

Not until about 1904 was regular English evening preaching service introduced. And when the unfortunate war with its blighting spirit of hate came on, all German preaching was dropped for a time. One of the saddest and most regretable things connected with this war on a language was the friction and dissension it caused within many of our churches at the very time when they so much needed to be inseparably bound together by Christian love and consequent fraternal harmony.

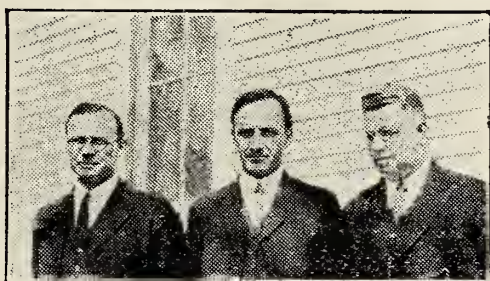
Fear not, little flock, for it  
is your Father's good pleasure  
to give you the kingdom!

Added to the language problem, the two facts, that families were large and that the chief occupation was farming which made migration an absolute necessity, largely account for the apparent numerical standstill of the church. Had the town of Halstead been able to absorb the youth of our church in useful, gainful, and agreeable occupation, there is no reason to doubt that the Hal-

stead church today might easily number 3 times its present membership. The town in this section which can see this, and has the vision to capitalize on it, will not only render a great service to the community and the State, but will itself profit most thereby and forge far ahead of its neighbors.

However, numerical expansion is not the only consideration. Spiritual fruition, service, and the widening of the area of influence and good will are equally essential.

As there are two ways in which a church may gain numerically, so it may grow intensively and extensively. Members of a living church must give as well as receive spiritual food.



**Jacob H. Langenwaller, J. E. Amstutz H. T. Unruh**

This church in its first 50 years has had 6 ministers: Valentine Krehbiel (1875-79), David Goerz (1878-97), Chr. Krehbiel (1879-1909), J. H. Langenwaller, J. E. Amstutz (1911-21), and now H. T. Unruh (1922- ) As was the traditional custom the 3 first named, who have passed to their reward, served without remuneration. And while they therefore could not give their

whole time to this work, God prospered the church visibly under their leadership, and their memory is sacred.

The three last named are here today, — still achieving, still pursuing. May God continue to cause his face to shine upon them!

At least four others had received calls but could not serve. Three of these had other charges and did not feel free to leave them. The fourth had to disappoint the church because after having been granted three years for preparation he then could not serve. He had temporarily gotten into the labyrinth of destructive criticism and could not thus preach the Gospel of Salvation thru Christ, which the church wanted and had a right to expect of him. The Halstead church has gained his everlasting gratitude by without a question granting his request to be released.

How anyone can harmonize it with a good conscience, with or without pay, to teach or to preach a "different Gospel" to Christians is a mystery to me. That does not only involve teaching what one may really believe to be the truth—which would be defensible ethically—but it involves knowingly leaving an employer under a false impression; more than that, it involves getting money or position under false pretense, and a betrayal of a sacred trust.

It would be fitting on an occasion like this, to place in the church a Memorial Slab or Tablet on which the names of all ministers who have served the church as pastors are inscribed. This is done by some

churches, and becomes more valuable with each passing generation.

Besides the six ministers mentioned above, at least seven others for a time had their church home here, mostly before being ordained. (J. S. Krehbiel, S. S. Haury, H. P. Krehbiel, H. H. Ewert, Benj. Ewert, John Lichti, Okla., John Lichti, Calif., and C. E. Krehbiel.)

Sister Frieda Kaufman of Bethel Deaconess Hospital, Newton; Sister Clara Kuehny in the Mission Field in India; Supt. Bertha Baumgartner of the Halstead Hospital, and others grew up here or spent part of their childhood and youth here.

The church has had 13 Deacons and 19 Secretaries in the half-century.

Deacons—Daniel Bachmann, Johannes Haury, John W. Ruth, Daniel Ruth, Jacob Vogt, Daniel Krehbiel, John Lehman, Jacob E. Schmitt, Daniel Haury, Bernhard P. Krehbiel, John Schroeder, Rudolf Mueller, Edwin J. Haury.

Secretaries—Jacob E. Ruth, Christian Schmutz, Daniel Langenwalter, David Goerz, B. Warkentin, J. E. Schmitt, H. H. Ewert, A. T. Kruse Sr., H. O. Kruse, D. C. Ruth, H. P. Krehbiel, J. L. Schowalter, John Schroeder, R. S. Haury, E. H. Kliever, J. A. Schowalter, Paul G. Krehbiel, S. F. Langenwalter, Martha Hirschler.

One hundred five marriages and 337 baptisms are recorded. But the list is incomplete. A number of medical Doctors, Nurses, one District Judge, Professors and Teachers have gone from this church. The first A. B. to go to a Mennonite in Kansas



from one of the large New England universities came to a member of the Halstead church in 1895. The second "Summa cum laude" Ph. D. degree given by the University of Chicago came to a member of this church.

A Roster of all professions and vocations would be very interesting, but we haven't time for that now.—However, we may see what value Christ placed on the Flock when he said: "The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep."

When one leaves thru the Minutes of the Annual Meetings and sees, time and again, how deficit upon deficit for school buildings, for church buildings, for repairs, for Conference activities, and especially for the Halstead Seminary, stared those struggling pioneers in the face, and how, ever and anon, they passed resolutions to bear their proportionate share and to pay their own debts, one can imagine how it must have pained them to see a project begun by them diverted or fail, and admires them the more for their devotion to the cause of God's kingdom.

On an occasion like this nothing could be more despicable than self-laudition. Far be it from us today to presume, or even to intimate that we have attained spiritual heights unknown to our forbears! They in their day, as the Apostle Paul in his, confessed, "By the grace of God I am what I am." We have not gotten beyond that, and woe to us if we ever should!

They have planted, and builded well on the Everlasting Foundation. May it be our



portion to water and to preserve, humbly trusting, as they did, in God the Father who gives the increase; and in the Holy Spirit, the unique Comforter, who is to guide us in all things; and in Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son, who said

Fear not, little flock, for it  
is your Father's good pleasure  
to give you the kingdom!

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**Former or Present  
Halstead Church Members**

**Ministers or Missionaries:**

Val. Krehbiel †  
D. Goerz †  
Chr. Krehbiel †  
J. E. Amstutz  
J. H. Langenwalter  
H. T. Unruh  
H. P. Krehbiel  
J. S. Krehbiel †  
M. M. Horsch  
John Lichti (Okla.)  
C. E. Krehbiel  
John Lichti (Calif.)  
S. S. Haury  
Benj. Ewert      Heinrich Koller †  
H. H. Ewert      Heinrich Koehn  
John Rich †      Joel Sprunger

**Deaconesses and Nurses:**

Sister Frieda (First Deaconess of our  
Conference)  
Sister Clara Kuehny (Missionary in  
India)  
Bertha Baumgartner  
Elsie Schroeder Krehbiel  
Helen Mueller Baer

Elizabeth Schowalter  
Caroline Mueller  
Emelie Berger Hirschler  
Ada Pleasant Schmitt

Professors:

H. H. Ewert  
H. O. Kruse †  
W. J. Baumgartner  
M. D. Baumgartner  
E. B. Krehbiel (Ph. D.)  
D. R. Krehbiel † (First A. B. here)  
J. H. Langenwaller (D. D.)

Doctors:

R. S. Haury  
J. E. Langenwaller  
Ed Baumgartner  
S. S. Haury

State Representative:

H. P. Krehbiel

District Judge:

P. J. Galle

Millers and Grain Dealers:

B. Warkentin † (First Mennonite Miller in Kansas.)  
J. W. Krehbiel  
R. A. Goerz  
A. P. Haury  
J. E. Ruth  
Jonah Ruth  
Emil Lehman  
Fred Ringelman  
D. R. Krehbiel †  
Jacob Galle †  
A. T. Kruse, Jr., †  
P. Wiebe †  
C. Bergthold †  
Will Mierau †

## Appendix A

### A brief history of the Senior Mission Society of the First Mennonite Church, Halstead, Kansas.

Anna V. Lehmann

March 22, 1925.

Only the church that is active can live and grow. It has been said: The church that does no missionary work is dead.

After the organization of the church, the women soon felt that they should do something to support Mission, and assist in other good causes; therefore in the year 1881 the society known as the "Halstead Frauen Naehverein," at present the Senior Mission Society, was organized. The manner of creating a fund for this purpose was by sewing, quilting and other hand-work being done, or by gifts of money and the regular dues which were five cents a week, or two dollars and sixty cents (\$2.60) a year for active members, honorary member contributing as they wished.

A short period of devotion consisting of scripture reading and prayer, the singing of a religious hymn, or some good article being read were also a part of these meetings, which were held on Thursday of every week until the year 1919 when it seemed advisable to meet once a month.

In the early years of the society they often helped to supply food, clothing and sometimes money to aid some destitute or needy family, in and around Halstead; as time went on people became more self-supporting and did not need this assistance so

much. For many years they have also made comforts, quilts and garments to be sent with other articles such as stockings, handkerchiefs, balls, dolls, marbles etc. to our City Missions in Los Angeles, Hutchinson and Chicago, also to the Indian Missions in Oklahoma, Arizona and Montana and to those across the waters in India and China.

During the late war knitting for the soldiers was done as well as some work in the Red Cross rooms, and since the war many a garment, food and money has found its way to Russia, Germany, Mexico and Canada, to help those in need.

As time went on the mothers desired that their daughters, who were growing up, might also become interested in missionary work and wish to do something for the cause: Therefore at their annual meeting on Feb. 4, 1894 a motion was passed to organize a girls' mission society. Being one of the girls then, I well remember the pleasure we had in making things for a bazaar, also things to put in the mission boxes, but for some reason or other the society existed for a short time only.

The society wishing to commemorate its twenty-fifth anniversary a picnic was arranged for and held in the park in July 1906. On this occasion a suitable program was rendered. Many of the members as well as others were present.

From records at hand I could not ascertain who, or how many were charter members. Mrs. Warkentin of Newton I believe was the first president, others who no doubt were charter members, are Mrs. L. M.

Schmitt, Mrs. J. L. Schowalter, Mrs. Barbara Kuehney, Mrs. Helen Goerz, Mrs. K. M. Krehbiel, Susan M. Ruth, and others. Mrs. D. Barkemeyer, also was a member who deserves special mention, in that after moving to Newton she still continued coming to the meetings for some time.

The number of members enrolled since the organization is 106; of these 26 have passed on to their reward, others have moved away or discontinued their membership for other reasons, so that at present the enrollment is 41 members.

It might be of interest to know for what length of time some members served as officers.

Anna Dester served the longest, from 1893 to 1921, or 29 years.

Mrs. K. M. Krehbiel was president from 1891 to 1917, or 27 years.

Anna V. Lehmann was secretary from 1905 to 1921 or 16 years.

Mrs. L. M. Schmitt was vice president from 1903 to 1917 or 15 years.

Mrs. W. E. Hackenberger was secretary from 1893 to 1903 or 11 years. Others served from 1 to 4 years.

The present president is Miss Katie B. Schmitt who has served the past eight years.

The receipts for the years from 1888 to the close of 1924 are as follows:

Received for work done	-----\$ 768.73
Received from all other sources	-- 3,606.03
Or a total in 36 years	-----\$4,344.76

A very small part of this was used for expenses other than material to be used for



garments or comforts for mission causes. The greater part went for Home and Foreign Missions.

If we should ask those who have been members of the society, I think they would all agree that they had spent many a pleasant and profitable hour within the circle of this society, although many times it may have meant a sacrifice of time, or maybe money.

I do not wish to close this brief History of our Senior Mission Society without giving thanks to our Heavenly Father, who gave willing hands and hearts and consecrated lives to make the work of the society possible.

May He who has blessed so richly in the past be with us still as we continue the work.

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## Appendix B

### History of the Junior Mission Society.

#### A. V. L.

In order to give you even a very brief history of our society, I must take you back about 44 years in the history of our church, for it was in the year of 1881, when the good mothers of this church organized what is today known as the Senior Mission Society.

Unknown to them, through continued efforts of service and prayer, their lives proved an example to others. They implanted into the hearts of their children a desire for service, so we find that the majority of

our charter members are the daughters of mothers who were very active in the senior organization.

At the annual meeting of the Senior Society on Feb. 4, 1894 a motion was passed to start a girls' missionary society, which was organized, but for unknown reasons in spite of the most strenuous efforts put forth on the part of those who saw and felt the need of such an organization, it went under.

In the spring of 1905 the question of organizing a society among the girls was again taken up. Several meetings were held and the organization of a Junior Mission Society was completed in the late summer of the same year. As a charter member I well know some of the struggles and efforts it took to start, and maintain it during its infancy. Not to our own efforts, would we attribute the success of our society, but much we feel is due to the prayers which have ascended to the throne of God in our behalf.

It was organized to stand for cooperation in the welfare of its members and the kingdom of God. To be true to its name and to the principle for which it stood, it could not only center its interest upon Home Mission work but must needs include Foreign Mission work also.

It was in the year 1907 when the society's first contribution found its way to India for the support of Agarmati, the little Indian girl, whom the society still continues to support. She has finished the High School course and at present is teaching in

our Girls' School in India. The prayers, which have ascended to the Father's throne in her behalf, have been answered in a very wonderful way and within recent years she accepted Christ as her personal Saviour.

She promises to become one of the faithful native helpers to whom our missionaries are looking with pride as direct fruits of their efforts in work and prayer.

The society has been a means of opening various channels of service to its members. During past years hundreds of articles of clothing have been sent to help meet the needs of the home and foreign mission fields. Other phases of work have been carried on as well. While records of our activities are not as complete as they should be, they show that over \$2,200 in money has been contributed through the efforts of the members. A very small portion of this was used for the annual expense of the society. Almost one-fifth of this sum was used for Agarmati's support and the balance was given for foreign and home mission work and other relief work.

It might interest you to know that 89 different members comprise the total membership of our society since its organization. Of this number two have been called to their eternal reward and we cherish fond memories of their useful lives. The largest number of members at one time was 55 and the present membership is 48.

Cooperation on the part of both societies has meant success to each organization. While some of our members have discontinued their Junior membership to become

Senior members, others carry membership in both organizations in order that the Senior Society may continue its work.

As the ranks of the Seniors of 1881 are thinning out, so will the ranks of the Juniors be doing as time moves on; others must fall in line if the work is to be carried on.

We are glad to know that some of the young people have taken it upon themselves to organize a third Society, although, as I understand the organization has not yet been completed, we wish them God's richest blessings in their undertaking and may they continue to follow in the footsteps of their mothers and grandmothers in building the kingdom of God upon earth, and laying up treasures in heaven.

Past history is but a challenge to us: We must face future opportunities with a desire to utilize them. Since we owe gratitude to the church through which these opportunities come we must earnestly strive to do our part that our little branch bear no less fruit in the future than it has in the past.

In order to do this we must have the co-operation of every member and member-to-be in increased prayers, increased interest, and increased service.

I wish to make the appeal, that all who are not yet members of either society, become such, for we need you all, old, middle-aged and young in the building of Christ's Kingdom.

## FOUNDING MEMBERS

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1. John Haury
2. John W. Ruth
3. Elizabeth Strohm Ruth
4. Jacob E. Ruth
5. Christina Risser Ruth
6. Jacob Dettweiler
7. Elizabeth Yoder Dettweiler
8. Daniel Haury
9. Anna Strohm Haury
10. Bernhard Warkentin
11. Peter Wiebe
12. Marie Dyck Wiebe
13. Jacob Wiebe
14. John Lehmann
15. Elisa Risser Lehmann
16. Daniel Langenwalter
17. Christina Schmutz Langenwalter
18. Elizabeth Dettweiler Ruth
19. Susan Ruth
20. Elizabeth Ruth Schowalter
21. Daniel Ruth|\*
22. Anna Schowalter Ruth \*
23. John Kuehny
24. Magdalene Schmidt Kuehny
25. Anna Fast Dettweiler
26. Valentine Krehbiel \*
27. Susanna Ruth Krehbiel \*
28. Daniel Bachmann \*
29. Helena Frantz Bachmann \*
30. Christ Hirschler \*
31. Katherine Eyman Hirschler \*
32. John Dettweiler \*
33. Katherine Hirschler Dettweiler \*



34. Christian Schmutz

35. Jacob Blum

Those marked with a \* joined the Christian Mennonite Church March 26, 1878 when that church was organized.

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## FOUNDING MEMBERS LIVING

March 22, 1925

Mrs. Elisa Risser Lehmann, Halstead

Mrs. Christina Schmutz Langenwaller  
Halstead

Mrs. Anna Fast Detweiler

Mrs. Katherina Hirschler Dettweiler,  
Upland, Calif.

J. E. Ruth, Kingfisher, Okla.

Daniel Haury, Halstead Kansas

Mrs. Elizabeth Ruth Schowalter, Glen-  
dale, Calif.

Christian Schmutz, Newton, Kansas



Christian Schmutz

Daniel Haury

Mrs. Eliza Lehmann

Mrs. Christina Langenwaller

(These were present at the anniversary)























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1524	10 "	7 "	"	1528	11 "	8 "	"
1525	9 "	6 "	"	1529	12 "	10 "	"
1526	$9\frac{3}{4}$ "	$7\frac{1}{8}$ "	"	1530	12 "	$9\frac{1}{8}$ "	"

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